

PAC GENERAL MEETING
January 21, 2009

PAC Executive in Attendance: Rhylin Bailie, Anita Gartner, Anne Deliyannides, Jen Mezei, Fiona Avakumovic, Zena Kwan, Pia Gant, Jane Andrew, Keith Chong

Regrets: Shannon Kaustinen, Denise Hayhurst

Meeting Commenced 7:12

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 19, 2008 – GENERAL MEETING

- Ann 1st, Jen 2nd

SNOW CLEARANCE ISSUES

- A forum was set up at the PAC General Meeting for parents to discuss city and school board policies and voice their concerns regarding snow clearance around the school.
- Because the lower mainland had experienced unusually heavy snowfalls there was not adequate snow clearance around Seaforth School before the schools opened in January
- This was a concern for parents of Seaforth during the first week of school as well as for other schools in the area.
- We all experienced similar problems during the first week of school:
 - Dangerous roads
 - Sidewalks not clear so even walking to school was treacherous
 - Schools roads not plowed, or only plowed to single lane
 - Cul-de-sacs slippery and dangerous
 - School sidewalks, courtyards and pathways not cleared
 - Pick-up and drop-off spots not cleared
 - Not all stairs cleared
- Snow clearing operations for city roads are prioritized as follows:
 - Arterial streets; these are the key routes for emergency vehicles, public transportation and the majority of street traffic
 - Collector streets
 - Bus routes
 - Residential streets with steep grades which have only one outlet.
- In Burnaby residents are responsible for clearing sidewalks adjacent to their property as soon as possible. Commercial and multi-family buildings must clear sidewalks by 10am any day the premises are occupied or open to the public.
- On Sunday, January 4th, City crews were deployed to the streets abutting Burnaby Elementary Schools to undertake additional snow clearing before the schools reopened on Monday. The task was completed but the unexpected snowfall on Sunday, January 4th evening had blanketed the streets again with up to another 10 cm of snow accumulation. During the night of January 4th and the following day, City crews were back on clearing arterial streets and collector streets.
- City staff will be undertaking a review of the operational procedures, service standards, technological improvements and required resources to identify possible improvement and changes to enhance the City's current snow removal practices and response.

- A number of representatives from various schools will be going to the next DPAC meeting to address the snow clearing around schools.
- As Seaforth School does not lead to any major thoroughfare the roads around Seaforth School are not a priority.
- District is very conservative about closing schools and has only closed schools approximately twice in the last 20 years.
- As Seaforth is thought of as a neighbourhood school that students can walk to they do not feel that Seaforth needs to be shut down due to excess snow. However, they do not take into account that Seaforth is a French Immersion school with an expanded catchment area.
- The School District only has two snow plows to clear the snow.
- There are over 50 sites that the school district needs to plow and elementary schools are usually not high priority for snow clearance.
- In Burnaby, custodial staff arrive early at the schools and make the decision to close the school or leave it open. In other school districts the school principal makes this decision.
- Custodian starts at 6:30 and started shoveling and sanding immediately. For one person to clear all the snow that had accumulated was impossible.
- Need 15 cm of snow to use machinery provided by school district.
- Teacher protocol is for the teachers to report to work on a snow day if a school is deemed open (they will find this information on the district web site). If they can not get to their regular school they need to go to the nearest Burnaby school and work there.
- All teachers made it to school and a majority of students came to school.
- If parents are concerned with bringing their children to school on a snow day the option may be to either:
 - come later (child will be marked late)
 - not attend at all (child will be marked absent)
- Seaforth hired outside contractor to clear the Seaforth parking lots on the first day back
- If district wants schools to be opened then they need to make them accessible.
- After lengthy discussion the group in attendance agreed on a number of suggestions for both the City and the District that should be presented to DPAC
- **Action Item – Jen - Jen to take a request to DPAC that the City of Burnaby change their policy regarding snow clearing on streets that house a school. Specifically**
 - city to plow two lanes of traffic on school roads
 - sidewalks around school need to be cleared
 - update on the road/sidewalk conditions near the school needs to be on the website no later than 7am, so parents can decide whether or not to bring their kids
- **Action Item – Rhylin – Rhylin to call for volunteers willing to help clear the school grounds and sidewalks of snow in the event of another heavy snowfall.**
 - If you fall on school property while shoveling snow on a volunteer basis you will not be compensated from WCB.
- **Action Item – Rishma - Rishma to get some quotes on snow blowers that the PAC can purchase for the school. Needs to be fairly heavy duty to be able to handle the amount of area that needs to be cleared.**
- **Action Item – Keith – Keith will see if the custodian would be allowed to operate a snow blower.**

BOY SMARTS

- Rhylin made an apology at the General PAC Meeting. Due to a miscommunication it was thought that Boy Smarts workshop made a profit of \$500. However, the “profit” that was made was that we managed to recoup the entire expense of the presentation, thereby not spending the \$500 that had been budgeted. Boy Smarts brought in \$1,060.00 making it a net profit of \$60.00.

CARNIVAL PROCEEDS

- Couldn’t reconcile approximately \$1400 of carnival proceeds. After significant investigation, it became apparent that an envelope containing cheques from the silent auction was lost, and the cheques were never cashed.
- The people who wrote these cheques were called and are reissuing new ones.
- PAC Executive will make sure that a procedure is put in place so this doesn’t happen again.

DONATIONS

- Teachers have redirected \$700 from the PAC donation program to special programs:
 - ESL, LAC, Challenge, Special Needs, Music, Core French and Speech/Language.
- Some of these programs were already included in the PAC budget, so perhaps these funds did not need to be redirected into these programs. PAC did not communicate clearly to the teachers that these funds were available to them.
- If the teachers would like the PAC to increase the amount of any of these items they can do so by stating their requirements and the PAC will try and increase the budgeted amounts in the next budget. PAC will also send a letter to teachers at the beginning of each year telling them what is in the budget so the teachers know to request the funds.

PERFECTIONISM

- So far there are 86 people signed up for the Perfectionism Workshop (from our school only).
- Have not opened up to the other schools yet, limiting the space for other school to 30 to 40 people.

TREASURER’S REPORT

- Cash Position:
 - General Operating Account \$16,537.43 (previously reported 7,497.04)
 - Gaming Account \$12,846.67 (previously reported \$13,024.66)
 - GIC \$ nil (previously reported \$15,021.70)
 - *TOTAL CASH POSITION* \$29,384.10
- Update on November / December activities:
 - Boy Smarts - Essentially the event was a “break even” in that no “planned” budget monies were spent.
 - Hot Lunch – total proceeds today - \$14,311; total expenses to date \$6,663; profit to date \$7,648.
 - Santa breakfast cost was \$1,163 (under budget by \$237).
 - To date - a summary of what PAC has spent / provided to the school (see attached summary):
 - Student activities / events \$3,274

- Teacher resources \$3,790
 - PAC hosted events / operations \$2,116
- Tax receipts for donations issued in the fall of 2008 have been mailed.
- GIC came due January 16th, 2009. Total interest earned with GIC was \$58.74. We looked into other triple AAA rated securities, such as money market funds, to determine additional options for PAC to earn interest. Both investments fluctuate according to current bank rates, with a money market fund yielding just slightly more return than a typical GIC. Given the extra logistics required to invest in a money market fund (transferring funds in and out), with very limited returns above what a GIC would give us, we have decided not to invest in a money market fund at this time.
- Majority of funds are spent in the second half of the school year, so the funds available to invest will decrease significantly over the next few months. Will advise next year's PAC to invest in a money market fund or GIC early in the school year to maximize the amount of interest earned (while funds are still high).
- Expected balance carried over at the end of the school year will be \$7291.67
- Need to have a float of \$2500.
- Need to think about what excess money should go towards.
- Teachers have a wish list:
 - up-to-date maps
 - stacking cups for the challenge program
 - FM systems for at least all of the primary teachers
 - All students could benefit from the FM systems as 1 in 6 words are not being heard by children due to ambient noises
 - These systems can cost up \$3000 per classroom

PLAYGROUND UPDATE

- Janet Lee will be looking into purchasing three new benches for the school playground, an initiative underway since last year, when Rachela Simon was in charge of the playground portfolio.
- We have a \$350 credit towards these benches with a company called Habitat.
- The cost of the three benches will be approximately \$1200 (this is going by last year's prices).
- The money for the benches is already in the budget from last year.
- Installation of these benches will not be done until the spring.
- Janet will get an updated quote for the benches from Habitat, and also from two other companies. Want to use the Habitat credit, but don't want to pay too much if Habitat is too expensive.
- Glen Lapthorne will order the benches once Janet has all the quotes/info that is needed.
- General PAC voted that if it is an extra \$200 for the benches (increase from last year's quote) then that's fine. Jen motioned.

EARTHQUAKE COMMITTEE

- Earthquake committee (10 members) had a meeting and developed a neighbourhood plan.
- The plan focuses on what happens 2 to 3 hours after a major event.
- There is \$4500 in PAC budget for earthquake supplies.
- The Earthquake Committee is focusing their time right now on deciding what are the high and low priority items for the Earthquake Container.

- The \$4500 budget will go towards high priority items and as more money is available they will then purchase secondary items.
- A number of items can be collected by the community, i.e. shovels, blankets, etc.
- Hoping to train the parents by phoning and timing them to see how long they take to pick up their children from Seaforth.
- Once the parents are trained then the Earthquake Committee will work on training the students in case of an emergency.

SPIRIT DAY

- Spirit Day is on April 24th.
- Near the end of this month the students will be asked to consider:
 - what types of presenters/topics that they would like
 - if they know of someone who would be a good speaker/presenter
- Diversity will enhance Spirit Day.
 - In the past Spirit day has had fencing/martial arts/people bringing their pets, etc.
- A lot of students prefer Spirit Day to Sports Day.
- Last year there was a shortage of presenters for the primary grades.
- One of the major problems for Spirit Day is that there is a lack of space as there may be up to 45 presenters in one time slot.
- Because of the lack of space Charles Rummel has been used as well as a contingency plan is in place to use the Salvation Army Church if we need it (with a bus shuttling the children back and forth).

DISTRICT REVIEW TEAM

- A district review team will be talking with Seaforth to review the School Plan and make recommendations on how to improve the school.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 13, Street Heart Classic.
- February 26, French Days of Music.
- Maple Man for the English students.
- March 12, Second Term Report Cards.

FSAs

- Union position is that all teachers are doing a good job and they do not want the teacher's to participate in these tests.
- At this time teachers are expected to administer the FSA tests.
- Students from grades 4 to 7 will take the tests.
- Testing is from February 2nd to February 28th.
- Teachers are to prepare the students for the tests (need to use a computer to answer multiple-choice questions, need good mouse skills) but not to teach to it.
- Ministry's position is that every student should have an assessment done so that every parent will know how their child/children are doing in school.
- If a student is at school on the day that FSAs are being written they will write it – however parents have an option of keeping their child/children at home that day.

CPF

- CPF will be holding their AGM and book swap on February 3rd from 6pm to 7:30pm.
- **Action Item – Fiona - Fiona will provide information for the next newsletter.**

BULLETIN BOARD

- Information on upcoming events is posted on the PAC Bulletin board.

DPAC REPRESENTATIVE

- We are allowed to have three DPAC representatives because of the size of our school. Currently we only have one.
- DPAC representatives are to attend six DPAC meetings per year.
- DPAC representatives have to be part of the PAC Executive.
- Nandita Narayan has volunteered to be one of the DPAC Representatives.

Meeting adjourned 9:11pm.